

# United States Foreign Policy WWI+WWII

Focus: To what extent did US foreign  
policy decisions further national  
security?

## The United States Enters the War

President Wilson was reluctant to enter World War I. When the War began, Wilson declared U.S. neutrality and demanded that the belligerents respect American rights as a neutral party. He hesitated to embroil the United States in the conflict with good reason. Americans were deeply divided about the European war and involvement in the conflict would certainly disrupt Progressive reforms. In 1914, he had warned that entry into the conflict would bring an end to Progressive reform. "Every reform we have won will be lost if we go into this war," he said. A popular song in 1915 was "I Didn't Raise My Boy to Be a Soldier."

In 1916, President Wilson narrowly won reelection after campaigning on the slogan, "He kept us out of war." His won the election with a 4,000 vote margin in California.

### Toward Intervention

Shortly after war erupted in Europe, President Wilson called on Americans to be "neutral in thought as well as deed." But quickly the United States began to lean toward Britain and France.

Convinced that wartime trade was necessary to fuel the growth of American trade, President Wilson refused to impose an embargo on trade with the belligerents. During the early years of the war, trade with the allies tripled.

1 This volume of trade quickly exhausted the Allies' cash reserves, forcing them to ask the United States for credit. In October 1915, President Wilson permitted loans to belligerents, a decision that greatly favored Britain and France. By 1917 American loans to the Allies had soared to \$2.25 billion; loans to Germany stood at a paltry \$27 million.

2 It was Germany's announcement in January 1917 that it would resume unrestricted submarine warfare that helped precipitate American entry into the conflict. Germany hoped to win the war within five months, and was willing to risk antagonizing Wilson on the assumption that even if the United States declared war, it could not mobilize quickly enough to change the course of the conflict.

3 Then a fresh insult led Wilson to demand a declaration of war. In March 1917, newspapers published the Zimmerman Note, an intercepted telegram from the German Foreign Secretary Arthur Zimmermann to the German ambassador to Mexico. The telegram said that if Germany went to war with the United States, Germany promised to help Mexico recover the territory it had lost during the 1840s, including Texas, New Mexico, California, and Arizona. The Zimmerman note and German attacks on three U.S. ships in mid-March led Wilson to ask Congress for a declaration of war.

4 One reason why Wilson decided to enter the war was so he could help design the peace settlement. Wilson viewed the war as an opportunity to destroy German militarism. "The world must be made safe for democracy," he told a joint session of Congress. Only six Senators and 30 Representatives voted against the war declaration.

## The Zimmerman Telegram

On 16 January 1917, the German Foreign Minister, Arthur Zimmerman sent the following telegram to Count von Bernstorff, the German ambassador in the United States.

Telegram text from The Zimmerman Telegram by Barbara Tuchman published in 1966 by Ballantine Books.

Most Secret

For Your Excellency's personal information and to be handed on to the Imperial Minister in Mexico

We intend to begin unrestricted submarine warfare on the first of February. We shall endeavor in spite of this to keep the United States neutral. In the event of this not succeeding, we make Mexico a proposal of an alliance on the following basis: Make war together, make peace together, generous financial support, and an understanding on our part that Mexico is to reconquer the lost territory in Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona. The settlement detail is left to you.

You will inform the President [*of Mexico*] of the above most secretly as soon as the outbreak of war with the United States is certain and add the suggestion that he should, on his own initiative, invite Japan to immediate adherence and at the same time mediate between Japan and ourselves.

Please call the President's attention to the fact that the unrestricted employment of our submarines now offers the prospect of compelling England to make peace within a few months. Acknowledge receipt.

Zimmerman

### Declaration Of War Against Germany-- April 6, 1917

Joint Resolution Declaring that a state of war exists between the Imperial German Government and the Government and the people of the United States and making provision to prosecute the same.

Whereas the Imperial German Government has committed repeated acts of war against the Government and the people of the United States of America: Therefore be it Resolved . . . That the state of war between the United States and the Imperial German Government which has thus been thrust upon the United States is hereby formally declared; and that the President be, and he is hereby, authorized and directed to employ the entire naval and military forces of the United States and the resources of the Government to carry on war against the Imperial German Government; and to bring the conflict to a successful termination all of the resources of the country are hereby pledged by the Congress of the United States.

Approved, April 6, 1917.

Why is the US becoming involved in the war according to this source?

US32

What drew the United States out of a policy of neutrality?

Major Factors	
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	

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## Woodrow Wilson: League of Nations speech (1919)

*On July 10, 1919, President Woodrow Wilson presented to the U.S. Senate the results of several months of negotiations at the Paris Peace Conference to draft a treaty that would end World War I. Among the provisions of the Treaty of Versailles was the outline for an international peacekeeping organization known as the League of Nations that had been Wilson's creation and chief contribution to the peace talks. Below is an excerpt of his speech to the Senate that discusses the league. Despite Wilson's unqualified support for U.S. ratification of the treaty and participation in the league, the U.S. Senate refused to do either, voting down ratification and declining to join the league in an effort to reestablish U.S. isolationism.*

It gives me pleasure to add to this formal reading of the result of our labors that the character of the discussion which occurred at the sittings of the commission was not only of the most constructive but of the most encouraging sort. It was obvious throughout our discussions that, although there were subjects upon which there were individual differences of judgment with regard to the method by which our objects should be obtained, there was practically at no point any serious differences of opinion or motive as to the objects which we were seeking.

Indeed, while these debates were not made the opportunity for the expression of enthusiasm and sentiments, I think the other members of the commission will agree with me that there was an undertone of high respect and of enthusiasm for the thing we were trying to do which was heartening throughout everything.

Because we felt that in a way this conference did entrust into us the expression of one of its highest and most important purposes, to see to it that the concord of the world in the future with regard to the objects of justice should not be subject to doubt or uncertainty; that the cooperation of the great body of nations should be assured in the maintenance of peace upon terms of honor and of international obligations.

The compulsion of that task was constantly upon us, and at no point was there shown the slightest desire to do anything but suggest the best means to accomplish that great object. There is very great significance, therefore, in the fact that the result was reached unanimously.

Fourteen nations were represented, among them all of those powers which for convenience we have called the Great Powers, and among the rest a representation of the greatest variety of circumstances and interests. So that I think we are justified in saying that the significance of the result, therefore, has the deepest of all meanings, the union of wills in a common purpose, a union of wills which cannot be resisted and which, I dare say, no nation will run the risk of attempting to resist.

Now, as to the character of the document. While it has consumed some time to read this document, I think you will see at once that it is very simple, and in nothing so simple as in the structure which it suggests for a league of nations, a body of delegates, an executive council, and a permanent secretariat.

When it came to the question of determining the character of the representation in the Body of Delegates, we were all aware of a feeling which is current throughout the world.

Inasmuch as I am stating it in the presence of the official representatives of the various governments here present, including myself, I may say that there is a universal feeling that the world cannot rest satisfied with merely official

guidance. There has reached us through many channels the feeling that if the deliberating body of the League of Nations was merely to be a body of officials representing the various governments, the peoples of the world would not be sure that some of the mistakes which preoccupied officials had admittedly made might not be repeated.

It was impossible to conceive a method or an assembly so large and various as to be really representative of the great body of the peoples of the world, because, as I roughly reckon it, we represent as we sit around this table more than 1.2 billion people.

You cannot have a representative assembly of 1.2 billion people, but if you leave it to each government to have, if it pleases, one or two or three representatives, though only with a single vote, it may vary its representation from time to time, not only, but it may (originate) the choice of its several representatives [wireless here unintelligible].

Therefore we thought that this was a proper and a very prudent concession to the practically universal opinion of plain men everywhere that they wanted the door left open to a variety of representation, instead of being confined to a single official body with which they could or might not find themselves in sympathy.

And you will notice that this body has unlimited rights of discussion. I mean of discussion of anything that falls within the field of international relations—and that it is especially agreed that war or international misunderstandings or anything that may lead to friction or trouble is everybody's business, because it may affect the peace of the world.

And in order to safeguard the popular power so far as we could of this representative body, it is provided, you will notice, that when a subject is submitted it is not to arbitration but to discussion by the Executive Council; it can, upon the initiative of either of the parties to the dispute, be drawn out of the Executive Council on the larger form of the general Body of Delegates, because through this instrument we are depending primarily and chiefly upon one great force, and this is the moral force of the public opinion of the world—the pleasing and clarifying and compelling influences of publicity—so that intrigues can no longer have their coverts; so that designs that are sinister can at anytime be drawn into the open; so that those things that are destroyed by the light may be promptly destroyed by the overwhelming light of the universal expression of the condemnation of the world.

Armed force is in the background in this program; but it is in the background, and, if the moral force of the world will not suffice, the physical force of the world shall. But that is the last resort, because this is intended as a constitution of peace, not as a league of war.

The simplicity of the document seems to me to be one of its chief virtues, because, speaking for myself, I was unable to see the variety of circumstances with which this League would have to deal. I was unable, therefore, to plan all the machinery that might be necessary to meet the differing and unexpected contingencies. Therefore, I should say of this document that it is not a straitjacket but a vehicle of life.

A living thing is born, and we must see to it what clothes we put on it. It is not a vehicle of power, but a vehicle in which power may be varied at the discretion of those who exercise it and in accordance with the changing circumstances of the time. And yet, while it is elastic, while it is general in its terms, it is definite in the one thing that we were called upon to make definite.

It is a definite guaranty of peace. It is a definite guaranty by word against aggression. It is a definite guaranty against the things which have just come near bringing the whole structure of civilization into ruin.

Its purposes do not for a moment lie vague. Its purposes are declared, and its powers are unmistakable. It is not in contemplation that this should be merely a league to secure the peace of the world. It is a league which can be used for cooperation in any international matter.

That is the significance of the provision introduced concerning labor. There are many ameliorations of labor conditions which can be effected by conference and discussion. I anticipate that there will be a very great usefulness in the Bureau of Labor which it is contemplated shall be set up by the League.

Men and women and children who work have been in the background through long ages and sometimes seemed to be forgotten, while governments have had their watchful and suspicious eyes upon the maneuvers of one another, while the thought of statesmen has been about structural action and the larger transactions of commerce and of finance.

Now, if I may believe the picture which I see, there comes into the foreground the great body of the laboring people of the world, the men and women and children upon whom the great burden of sustaining the world must from day to day fall, whether we wish it to do so or not; people who go to bed tired and wake up without the stimulation of lively hope. These people will be drawn into the field of international consultation and help, and will be among the wards of the combined governments of the world. This is, I take leave to say, a very great step in advance in the mere conception of that.

Then, as you will notice, there is an imperative article concerning the publicity of all international agreements. Henceforth no member of the League can call any agreement valid which it has not registered with the secretary general, in whose office, of course, it will be subject to the examination of any body representing a member of the League. And the duty is laid upon the secretary general to earliest possible time.

I suppose most persons who have not been conversant with the business of foreign affairs do not realize how many hundreds of these agreements are made in a single year, and how difficult it might be to publish the more unimportant of them immediately. How uninteresting it would be to most of the world to publish them immediately, but even they must be published just as soon as it is possible for the secretary general to publish them.

There has been no greater advance than this, gentlemen. If you look back upon the history of the world you will see how helpless peoples have too often been a prey to powers that had no conscience in the matter. It has been one of the many distressing revelations of recent years that the great power which has just been, happily, defeated put intolerable burdens and injustices upon the helpless people of some of the colonies which it annexed to itself; that its interest was rather their extermination than their development; that the desire was to possess their land for European purposes, and not to enjoy their confidence in order that mankind might be lifted in these places to the next higher level.

Now, the world, expressing its conscience in law, says there is an end of that, that our consciences shall be settled to this thing. States will be picked out which have already shown that they can exercise a conscience in this matter, and under their tutelage the helpless peoples of the world will come into a new light and into a new hope.

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## Henry Cabot Lodge: Opposition to the Treaty of Versailles speech (1919)

*In this 1919 speech, Henry Cabot Lodge argues against American membership in the League of Nations, as provided for the Treaty of Versailles. Lodge opposes U.S. collaboration with foreign nations and proposes that international law will allow the United States to maintain control of American lives. His opinion is clear when he states: "I have loved but one flag and I cannot share that devotion and give affection to the mongrel banner invented for a league."*

As it stands there is no doubt whatever in my mind that American troops and American ships may be ordered to any part of the world by nations other than the United States, and that is a proposition to which I for one can never assent. It must be made perfectly clear that no American soldiers, not even a corporal's guard, that no American sailors, not even the crew of a submarine, can ever be engaged in war or ordered anywhere except by the constitutional authorities of the United States. To Congress is granted by the Constitution the right to declare war, and nothing that would take the troops out of the country at the bidding or demand of other nations should ever be permitted except through congressional action. The lives of Americans must never be sacrificed except by the will of the American people expressed through their chosen Representatives in Congress. This is a point upon which no doubt can be permitted. American soldiers and American sailors have never failed the country when the country called upon them. They went in their hundreds of thousands into the war just closed. They went to die for the great cause of freedom and of civilization. They went at their service. We were late in entering the war. We made no preparation, as we ought to have done, for the ordeal which was clearly coming upon us; but we went and we turned the wavering scale. It was done by the American soldier, the American sailor, and the spirit and energy of the American people. They overrode all obstacles and all shortcomings on the part of the administration or of Congress and gave to their country a great place in the great victory. It was the first time we had been called upon to rescue the civilized world. Did we fail? On the contrary, we succeeded, succeeded largely and nobly, and we did it without any command from any league of nations. When the emergency came we met it, and we were able to meet it because we had built up on this continent the greatest and most powerful nation in the world, built it up under our own policies, in our own way, and one great element of our strength was the fact that we had held aloof and had not thrust ourselves into European quarrels; that we had no selfish interest to serve. We made great sacrifices. We have done splendid work. I believe that we do not require to be told by foreign nations when we shall do work which freedom and civilization require. I think we can move to victory much better under our own command than under the command of others. Let us unite with the world to promote the peaceable settlement of all international disputes. Let us try to develop international law. Let us associate ourselves with the other nations for these purposes. But let us retain in our own hands and in our own control the lives of the youth of the land. Let no American be sent into battle except by the constituted authorities of his own country and by the will of the people of the United States.

I have loved but one flag and I cannot share that devotion and give affection to the mongrel banner invented for a league. Internationalism, illustrated by the Bolshevik and by the men to whom all countries are alike, provided they can make money out of them, is to me repulsive. National I must remain, and in that way I, like all other Americans, can render the amplest service to the world. The United States is the world's best hope, but if you fetter her in the interests and quarrels of other nations, if you tangle her in the intrigues of Europe, you will destroy her power for good and endanger her very existence. Leave her to march freely through the centuries to come as in the years that have gone. Strong, generous, and confident, she has nobly served mankind. Beware how you trifle with your marvelous inheritance, this great land of ordered liberty, for if we stumble and fall, freedom and civilizations everywhere will go down in ruin.

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With your group, respond to the following:

1. What are Wilson's reasons for joining the League of Nations?
2. What are Lodge's reasons for opposing the League of Nations?
3. Which man makes the stronger case? (Cite specifics to support your claim.)
4. Imagine yourselves as citizens in 1919: a returning soldier, a mother who lost her son, a senator (Republican or Democrat), a farmer, a recent immigrant living in a large city, etc. Which position regarding the treaty and the League of Nations do you favor? Why?

Be prepared to share your opinions with other groups in class.



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### 1878-1920

#### November 19, 1919 A Bitter Rejection

When members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee learned of former President Woodrow Wilson's death in 1924, they asked their chairman, Henry Cabot Lodge, to represent them at the funeral. Learning of this plan, the president's widow sent Lodge the following note: "Realizing that your presence would be embarrassing to you and unwelcome to me, I write to request that you do not attend."

Democrat Wilson and Republican Lodge had disliked one another for years. Among the first to earn doctoral degrees from the nation's newly established graduate schools, each man considered himself the country's preeminent scholar in politics and scorned the other.

The emergence of World War I intensified their rivalry. By 1918, Wilson had been president for nearly six years, while Lodge had represented Massachusetts in the Senate for a quarter century. Both considered themselves experts in international affairs. In setting policy for ending the war, Wilson, the idealist, sought a "peace without victory," while Lodge, the realist, demanded Germany's unconditional surrender.

When the 1918 midterm congressional elections transferred control of the Senate from the Democrats to the Republicans, Lodge became both majority leader and Foreign Relations Committee chairman. Whether Wilson liked it or not, he needed Lodge's active support to ensure Senate approval of the Treaty of Versailles and its provision for a League of Nations on which he had staked so much of his political prestige.

Wilson chose to ignore Lodge. He offended the Senate by refusing to include senators among the negotiators accompanying him to the Paris Peace Conference and by making conference results public before discussing them with committee members. In a flash of anger against what he considered Senate interference, Wilson denounced Lodge and his allies as "contemptible, narrow, selfish, poor little minds that never get anywhere but run around in a circle and think they are going somewhere."

After Lodge's committee added numerous "reservations" and amendments to the treaty, the frustrated president took his campaign to the nation. During a cross-country tour in October 1919, he suffered a physical collapse that further clouded his political judgment.

In November, Lodge sent to the Senate floor a treaty with 14 reservations, but no amendments. In the face of Wilson's continued unwillingness to negotiate, the Senate on November 19, 1919, for the first time in its history, rejected a peace treaty.

**Reference Items:**

Cooper, John Milton, Jr. *Breaking the Heart of the World: Woodrow Wilson and the Fight for the League of Nations*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001.



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### 1878-1920

#### July 10, 1919 Woodrow Wilson Addresses the Senate

On July 10, 1919, the president of the United States, for the first time since 1789, personally delivered a treaty to the Senate. This was no ordinary treaty; it was the Treaty of Versailles, ending World War I and establishing the League of Nations. As Secret Service agents and Capitol police sealed off the Senate wing to everyone without a special pass, President Woodrow Wilson walked into the chamber lugging the over-sized document under his right arm. Recently returned from Paris and his unprecedented self-assigned role as leader of the American negotiating team, Wilson hoped for prompt Senate approval, but feared trouble from Republicans, newly restored as the chamber's majority party.

The president's address set his ratification campaign off to a stumbling start, as he strained to read from typewritten notes on small index cards. Perhaps suffering from the effects of a small stroke, Wilson inadvertently omitted words as he proceeded. Realizing this, he stopped and repeated the garbled sentence, only to drop more words and repeat more sentences.

Only near the end of his forty-minute address did Wilson approach eloquence. Setting aside his cards, the president turned to the Republican side of the chamber, where members sat in sullen hostility. He declared that treaty approval was their only option. "The stage is set, the destiny disclosed. It has come about by no plan of our conceiving, but by the hand of God. We cannot turn back. The light streams on the path ahead, and nowhere else." His conclusion evoked only scattered applause.

Wilson's worsening medical condition, including a major stroke the following October, robbed him of the resiliency that had brought significant legislative victories earlier in his presidency. Refusing to agree to the "reservations" necessary to gain vital support from moderate Republicans, Wilson suffered major defeats as the Senate rejected the treaty in November and again the following March.

**Reference Items:**  
 Bailey, Thomas K. *Woodrow Wilson and the Great Betrayal*. Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1945.  
 Hecksher, August. *Woodrow Wilson*. New York: Scribners, 1991.

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# The Road to WWII

World Events		US Actions	
1922	Mussolini grabs Italy		
1931	Japan invades Manchuria		
1933	Hitler grabs Germany		
1936-1939	Spanish Civil War	1935	1 <sup>st</sup> Neutrality Act (no arms to belligerents)
1937	Japan invades China proper	1936	2 <sup>nd</sup> Neutrality Act (extends '35 and adds loans/credit)
March 1936	Germany occupies Rhineland	1937	3 <sup>rd</sup> Neutrality Act (no arm merchantmen, no arms sales, neutral travel, belligerents includes civil wars per presidents' discretion)
March 1938	Anschluss between Germany and Austria	October 1937	Quarantine Speech
September 1938	Munich Conference (a.k.a. Betrayal at Munich)		
March 1939	Hitler takes the rest of Czechoslovakia		
September 1939	Germany and Soviets invade Poland		
April 1940	Germany attacks Scandinavia	November 1939	4 <sup>th</sup> Neutrality Act ("Neutrality" = Cash and Carry)
May 1940	German attacks the Low Countries		
June 1940	France falls to Germany (England stands alone)		
Summer 1940	Battle of Britain begins (peaks in fall)		
		September 1940	Destroyers for Bases deal & Selective Service Act
		October 1940	FDR promises Boston crowd that "I have said this before, but I shall say it again and again and again: Your boys are not going to be sent into any foreign wars."
		November 1940	FDR wins 3 <sup>rd</sup> term
Spring 1941	Germans push British out of N. Africa to the Egyptian border	January 1941	Four Freedoms (of speech & worship, from fear or want)
June 1941	Germany invades Russia	March 1941	Lend Lease
September 1941	USS Greer sunk by German UBoat	July 1941	US convoys ships as far as Iceland
October 1941	USS Reuben James sunk by German UBoat	August 1941	Atlantic Charter (see reverse)
December 7, 1941	Japan attacks Pearl Harbor	September 1941	Shoot on Sight policy
		December 1941	US declares war on Japan, Germany
			Declares war on US

Aug 23, 1939 Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact  
Guaranteed that these two countries would not attack each other

## The United States Responds Cautiously

Most Americans were alarmed by the international conflicts of the mid-1930s but believed that the United States should not get involved. In 1928, the United States had signed the Kellogg-Briand Pact. The treaty was signed by 62 countries and declared that war would not be used "as an instrument of national policy." Yet it did not include a plan to deal with countries that broke their pledge. The Pact was, therefore, only a small step toward peace.

**AMERICANS CLING TO ISOLATIONISM** In the early 1930s, a flood of books argued that the United States had been dragged into World War I by greedy bankers and arms dealers. Public outrage led to the creation of a congressional committee, chaired by North Dakota Senator Gerald Nye, that held hearings on these charges. The Nye committee fueled the controversy by documenting the large profits that banks and manufacturers made during the war. As the furor grew over these "merchants of death," Americans became more determined than ever to avoid war. Antiwar feeling was so strong that the Girl Scouts of America changed the color of its uniforms from khaki to green to appear less militaristic. ⑤

Americans' growing isolationism eventually had an impact on President Roosevelt's foreign policy. When he had first taken office in 1933, Roosevelt felt comfortable reaching out to the world in several ways. He officially recognized the Soviet Union in 1933 and agreed to exchange ambassadors with Moscow. He continued the policy of nonintervention in Latin America—begun by Presidents Coolidge and Hoover—with his Good Neighbor Policy and withdrew armed forces stationed there. In 1934, Roosevelt pushed the Reciprocal Trade Agreement Act through Congress. This act lowered trade barriers by giving the president the power to make trade agreements with other nations and was aimed at reducing

### MAIN IDEA

#### Analyzing Causes

⑤ What factors contributed to Americans' growing isolationism?

### Analyzing Political Cartoons

#### "IT AIN'T WHAT IT USED TO BE"

During the late 1930s, Americans were divided about becoming involved in "Europe's quarrels." Some people felt that the United States should be more involved in the economic and political problems occurring across the Atlantic. Isolationists—people who believed the United States should stay completely out of other nations' affairs except in the defense of the United States—strictly opposed intervening. The idea that America and Europe were two separate worlds divided by an ocean that could guarantee safety was quickly eroding.

#### SKILLBUILDER

##### Analyzing Political Cartoons

1. What does Uncle Sam's turning his back on Europe show about American attitudes in the late 1930s?
2. What U.S. policy does the cartoon imply?
3. Why might the Atlantic Ocean have appeared to shrink in the late 1930s?

SEE SKILLBUILDER HANDBOOK, PAGE R24.



tariffs by as much as 50 percent. In an effort to keep the United States out of future wars, beginning in 1935, Congress passed a series of **Neutrality Acts**. The first two acts outlawed arms sales or loans to nations at war. The third act was passed in response to the fighting in Spain. This act extended the ban on arms sales and loans to nations engaged in civil wars.

**NEUTRALITY BREAKS DOWN** Despite congressional efforts to legislate neutrality, Roosevelt found it impossible to remain neutral. When Japan launched a new attack on China in July 1937, Roosevelt found a way around the Neutrality Acts. Because Japan had not formally declared war against China, the president claimed there was no need to enforce the Neutrality Acts. The United States continued sending arms and supplies to China. A few months later, Roosevelt spoke out strongly against isolationism in a speech delivered in Chicago. He called on peace-loving nations to "quarantine," or isolate, aggressor nations in order to stop the spread of war.

### A PERSONAL VOICE FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT

"The peace, the freedom, and the security of 90 percent of the population of the world is being jeopardized by the remaining 10 percent who are threatening a breakdown of all international order and law. Surely the 90 percent who want to live in peace under law and in accordance with moral standards that have received almost universal acceptance through the centuries, can and must find some way . . . to preserve peace."

—"Quarantine Speech," October 5, 1937

At last Roosevelt seemed ready to take a stand against aggression—that is, until isolationist newspapers exploded in protest, accusing the president of leading the nation into war. Roosevelt backed off in the face of criticism, but his speech did begin to shift the debate. For the moment the conflicts remained "over there."

## SECTION 1

### ASSESSMENT

#### 1. TERMS & NAMES For each term or name, write a sentence explaining its significance.

• Joseph Stalin  
• totalitarian

• Benito Mussolini  
• fascism

• Adolf Hitler  
• Nazism

• Francisco Franco  
• Neutrality Acts

#### MAIN IDEA

##### 2. TAKING NOTES

Using a web diagram like the one below, fill it in with the main ambition of each dictator.



What ambitions did the dictators have in common?

#### CRITICAL THINKING

##### 3. ANALYZING CAUSES

How did the Treaty of Versailles sow the seeds of instability in Europe?

**Think About:**

- effects of the treaty on Germany and the Soviet Union
- effects of the treaty on national pride
- the economic legacy of the war

##### 4. DRAWING CONCLUSIONS

Why do you think Hitler found widespread support among the German people? Support your answer with details from the text.

##### 5. FORMING GENERALIZATIONS

Would powerful nations or weak nations be more likely to follow an isolationist policy? Explain.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

US32

Isolationist

v.

Interventionist

## POINT

### **"The United States should not become involved in European wars."**

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#### **THINKING CRITICALLY**

- 1. CONNECT TO TODAY Making Inferences** After World War I, many Americans became isolationists. Do you recommend that the United States practice isolationism today? Why or why not?
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 SEE SKILLBUILDER HANDBOOK, PAGE R34.

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deluded by the romantic notion that the Americas can go on living happily and peacefully in a Nazi-dominated world." He added, "Let us not ask ourselves whether the Americas should begin to defend themselves after the first attack . . . or the twentieth attack. The time for active defense is now."

# America Moves Toward War

## MAIN IDEA

In response to the fighting in Europe, the United States provided economic and military aid to help the Allies achieve victory.

## WHY IT MATTERS NOW

The military capability of the U. S. became a deciding factor in World War II and in world affairs ever since.

## Terms & Names

- Axis powers
- Lend-Lease Act
- Atlantic Charter
- Allies
- Hideki Tojo

## One American's Story

Two days after Hitler invaded Poland, President Roosevelt spoke reassuringly to Americans about the outbreak of war in Europe.

**A PERSONAL VOICE** FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT  
 “This nation will remain a neutral nation, but I cannot ask that every American remain neutral in thought as well. . . . Even a neutral cannot be asked to close his mind or his conscience. . . . I have said not once, but many times, that I have seen war and I hate war. . . . As long as it is my power to prevent, there will be no blackout of peace in the U.S.”

—radio speech, September 3, 1939

Although Roosevelt knew that Americans were still deeply committed to staying out of war, he also believed that there could be no peace in a world controlled by dictators.



▲  
Franklin D.  
Roosevelt

## The United States Musters Its Forces

As German tanks thundered across Poland, Roosevelt revised the Neutrality Act of 1935. At the same time, he began to prepare the nation for the struggle he feared lay just ahead.

**MOVING CAUTIOUSLY AWAY FROM NEUTRALITY** In September of 1939, Roosevelt persuaded Congress to pass a “cash-and-carry” provision that allowed warring nations to buy U.S. arms as long as they paid cash and transported them in their own ships. Providing the arms, Roosevelt argued, would help France and Britain defeat Hitler and keep the United States out of the war. Isolationists attacked Roosevelt for his actions. However, after six weeks of heated debate, Congress passed the Neutrality Act of 1939, and a cash-and-carry policy went into effect.

## Analyzing Political Cartoons

### CARVING IT UP

The three Axis nations—Germany, Italy, and Japan—were a threat to the entire world. They believed they were superior and more powerful than other nations, especially democracies. By signing a mutual defense pact, the Axis powers believed the United States would never risk involvement in a two-ocean war. This cartoon shows the Axis powers' obsession with global domination.

#### SKILLBUILDER Analyzing Political Cartoons

1. What are the Axis leaders—Hitler, Mussolini, and Tojo—greedily carving up?
2. What do you think the artist means by showing Hitler doing the carving?


 SEE SKILLBUILDER HANDBOOK, PAGE R24.



**THE AXIS THREAT** The United States cash-and-carry policy began to look like too little too late. By summer 1940, France had fallen and Britain was under siege. Roosevelt scrambled to provide the British with “all aid short of war.” By June he had sent Britain 500,000 rifles and 80,000 machine guns, and in early September the United States traded 50 old destroyers for leases on British military bases in the Caribbean and Newfoundland. British prime minister Winston Churchill would later recall this move with affection as “a decidedly unneutral act.”

On September 27 Americans were jolted by the news that Germany, Italy, and Japan had signed a mutual defense treaty, the Tripartite Pact. The three nations became known as the **Axis Powers**.


The Tripartite Pact was aimed at keeping the United States out of the war. Under the treaty, each Axis nation agreed to come to the defense of the others in case of attack. This meant that if the United States were to declare war on any one of the Axis powers, it would face its worst military nightmare—a two-ocean war, with fighting in both the Atlantic and the Pacific.

**BUILDING U.S. DEFENSES** Meanwhile, Roosevelt asked Congress to increase spending for national defense. In spite of years of isolationism, Nazi victories in 1940 changed U.S. thinking, and Congress boosted defense spending. Congress also passed the nation’s first peacetime military draft—the Selective Training and Service Act. Under this law 16 million men between the ages of 21 and 35 were registered. Of these, 1 million were to be drafted for one year but were only allowed to serve in the Western Hemisphere. Roosevelt himself drew the first draft numbers as he told a national radio audience, “This is a most solemn ceremony.” 

**ROOSEVELT RUNS FOR A THIRD TERM** That same year, Roosevelt decided to break the tradition of a two-term presidency, begun by George Washington, and run for reelection. To the great disappointment of isolationists, Roosevelt’s Republican opponent, a public utilities executive named Wendell Willkie, supported Roosevelt’s policy of aiding Britain. At the same time, both Willkie and Roosevelt promised to keep the nation out of war. Because there was so little difference between the candidates, the majority of voters chose the one they knew best. Roosevelt was reelected with nearly 55 percent of the votes cast.

#### MAIN IDEA

#### Analyzing Effects

-  What impact did the outbreak of war in Europe have on U.S. foreign and defense policy?

## "The Great Arsenal of Democracy"

Not long after the election, President Roosevelt told his radio audience during a fireside chat that it would be impossible to negotiate a peace with Hitler. "No man can tame a tiger into a kitten by stroking it." He warned that if Britain fell, the Axis powers would be left unchallenged to conquer the world, at which point, he said, "all of us in all the Americas would be living at the point of a gun." To prevent such a situation, the United States had to help defeat the Axis threat by turning itself into what Roosevelt called "the great arsenal of democracy."

**THE LEND-LEASE PLAN** By late 1940, however, Britain had no more cash to spend in the arsenal of democracy. Roosevelt tried to help by suggesting a new plan that he called a lend-lease policy. Under this plan, the president would lend or lease arms and other supplies to "any country whose defense was vital to the United States."

Roosevelt compared his plan to lending a garden hose to a neighbor whose house was on fire. He asserted that this was the only sensible thing to do to prevent the fire from spreading to your own property. Isolationists argued bitterly against the plan, but most Americans favored it, and Congress passed the **Lend-Lease Act** in March 1941.

### Vocabulary

**lease:** to grant use or occupation of under the terms of a contract

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SEE SKILLBUILDER HANDBOOK, PAGE R34.

## MAIN IDEA

### Drawing Conclusions

B Why did Roosevelt take one "unneutral" step after another to assist Britain and the Soviet Union in 1941?

**SUPPORTING STALIN** Britain was not the only nation to receive lend-lease aid. In June 1941, Hitler broke the agreement he had made in 1939 with Stalin not to go to war and invaded the Soviet Union. Acting on the principle that "the enemy of my enemy is my friend," Roosevelt began sending lend-lease supplies to the Soviet Union. Some Americans opposed providing aid to Stalin; Roosevelt, however, agreed with Winston Churchill, who had said "if Hitler invaded Hell," the British would be prepared to work with the devil himself. B

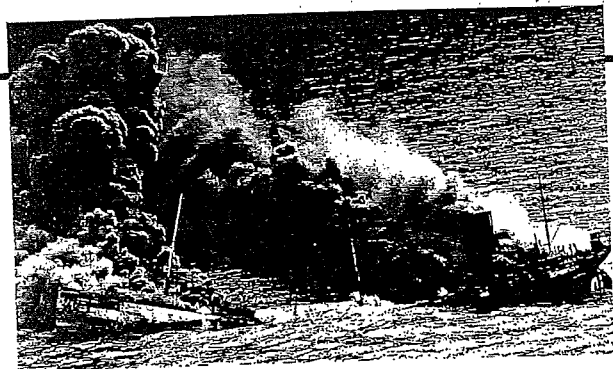
**GERMAN WOLF PACKS** Providing lend-lease aid was one thing, but to ensure the safe delivery of goods to Britain and to the Soviet Union, supply lines had to be kept open across the Atlantic Ocean. To prevent delivery of lend-lease shipments, Hitler deployed hundreds of German submarines—U-boats—to attack supply ships.

From the spring through the fall of 1941, individual surface attacks by individual U-boats gave way to what became known as the wolf pack attack. At night groups of up to 40 submarines patrolled areas in the North Atlantic where convoys could be expected. Wolf packs were successful in sinking as much as 350,000 tons of shipments in a single month. In September 1941, President Roosevelt granted the navy permission for U.S. warships to attack German U-boats in self-defense. By late 1943, the submarine menace was contained by electronic detection techniques (especially radar), and by airborne antisubmarine patrols operating from small escort aircraft carriers.

## Science & Technology

### GERMAN WOLF PACKS

On October 17, 1940, near Rockall, west of Ireland, a British Convoy, SC-7 (shown below), was attacked by a German wolf pack. The convoy was outlined clearly against a moonlit sky, making the merchant ships easy prey.



At the start of the war, the British had too few warships to escort the convoys.

▲ A tanker burns and sinks in the Atlantic Ocean after being torpedoed by a German U-boat.

German aircraft could patrol 1,000 miles out to sea to scout for convoys.

The Germans used radios to summon U-boats into a fighting wolf pack.

U-boats used hydrophonic equipment to pick up the sound of convoy propellers up to 100 miles away.

Convoys pinned their hopes on finding U-boats using ASDIC—sonar apparatus that could detect submerged submarines.

## FDR Plans for War

Although Roosevelt was popular, his foreign policy was under constant attack. American forces were seriously underarmed. Roosevelt's August 1941 proposal to extend the term of draftees passed in the House of Representatives by only one vote. With the army provided for, Roosevelt began planning for the war he was certain would come.

**THE ATLANTIC CHARTER** While Congress voted on the extension of the draft, Roosevelt and Churchill met secretly at a summit aboard the battleship USS *Augusta*. Although Churchill hoped for a military commitment, he settled for a joint declaration of war aims, called the **Atlantic Charter**. Both countries pledged the following: collective security, disarmament, self-determination, economic cooperation, and freedom of the seas. Roosevelt disclosed to Churchill that he couldn't ask Congress for a declaration of war against Germany, but "he would wage war" and do "everything" to "force an incident."

The Atlantic Charter became the basis of a new document called "A Declaration of the United Nations." The term *United Nations* was suggested by Roosevelt to express the common purpose of the **Allies**, those nations that had fought the Axis powers. The declaration was signed by 26 nations, "four-fifths of the human race" observed Churchill. ©

### MAIN IDEA

#### Summarizing

© Why was the Atlantic Charter important?



U.S. newspapers described Hideki Tojo as "smart, hard-boiled, resourceful, [and] contemptuous of theories, sentiments, and negotiations."

The Nazi press in Germany praised Tojo as "a man charged with energy, thinking clearly and with a single purpose." To a British paper, Tojo was "the son of Satan" whose single purpose was "unleashing all hell on the Far East." In Japan, however, Tojo was looked up to as a man whose "decisive leadership was a signal for the nation to rise and administer a great shock to the anti-Axis powers."

**SHOOT ON SIGHT** After a German submarine fired on the U.S. destroyer *Greer* in the Atlantic on September 4, 1941, Roosevelt ordered navy commanders to respond. "When you see a rattlesnake poised to strike," the president explained, "you crush him." Roosevelt ordered the navy to shoot the German submarines on sight.

Two weeks later, the *Pink Star*, an American merchant ship, was sunk off Greenland. In mid-October, a U-boat torpedoed the U.S. destroyer *Kearny*, and 11 lives were lost.

Days later, German U-boats sank the U.S. destroyer *Reuben James*, killing more than 100 sailors. "America has been attacked," Roosevelt announced grimly. "The shooting has started. And history has recorded who fired the first shot." As the death toll mounted, the Senate finally repealed the ban against arming merchant ships. A formal declaration of a full-scale war seemed inevitable. D

### MAIN IDEA

#### Analyzing Causes

D Why did the United States enter into an undeclared shooting war with Germany in fall 1941?

## Japan Attacks the United States

The United States was now involved in an undeclared naval war with Hitler. However, the attack that brought the United States into the war came from Japan.

**JAPAN'S AMBITIONS IN THE PACIFIC** Germany's European victories created new opportunities for Japanese expansionists. Japan was already in control of Manchuria. In July 1937, **Hideki Tojo** (hē'd-kē tō'jō'), chief of staff of Japan's Kwantung Army, launched the invasion into China. As French, Dutch, and British colonies lay unprotected in Asia, Japanese leaders leaped at the opportunity to unite East Asia under Japanese control by seizing the colonial lands. By 1941, the British were too busy fighting Hitler to block Japanese expansion. Only the U.S. and its Pacific islands remained in Japan's way.

## MAIN IDEA

### Analyzing Issues

Ⓔ How was oil a source of conflict between Japan and the United States?

The Japanese began their southward push in July 1941 by taking over French military bases in Indochina (now Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos). The United States protested this new act of aggression by cutting off trade with Japan. The embargoed goods included one Japan could not live without—oil to fuel its war machine. Japanese military leaders warned that without oil, Japan could be defeated without its enemies ever striking a blow. The leaders declared that Japan must either persuade the United States to end its oil embargo or seize the oil fields in the Dutch East Indies. This would mean war. Ⓔ

**PEACE TALKS ARE QUESTIONED** Shortly after becoming the prime minister of Japan, Hideki Tojo met with emperor Hirohito. Tojo promised the emperor that the Japanese government would attempt to preserve peace with the Americans. But on November 5, 1941, Tojo ordered the Japanese navy to prepare for an attack on the United States.

The U.S. military had broken Japan's secret communication codes and learned that Japan was preparing for a strike. What it didn't know was where the attack would come. Late in November, Roosevelt sent out a "war warning" to military commanders in Hawaii, Guam, and the Philippines. If war could not be avoided, the warning said, "the United States desires that Japan commit the first overt act." And the nation waited.

The peace talks went on for a month. Then on December 6, 1941, Roosevelt received a decoded message that instructed Japan's peace envoy to reject all American peace proposals. "This means war," Roosevelt declared.

**THE ATTACK ON PEARL HARBOR** Early the next morning, a Japanese dive-bomber swooped low over Pearl Harbor—the largest U.S. naval base in the Pacific. The bomber was followed by more than 180 Japanese warplanes launched from six aircraft carriers. As the first Japanese bombs found their targets, a radio operator flashed this message: "Air raid on Pearl Harbor. This is not a drill."

For an hour and a half, the Japanese planes were barely disturbed by U.S. antiaircraft guns and blasted target after target. By the time the last plane soared off around 9:30 A.M., the devastation was appalling. John Garcia, a pipe fitter's apprentice, was there.



▲ Newspaper headlines announce the surprise Japanese attack.

### A PERSONAL VOICE JOHN GARCIA

"It was a mess. I was working on the U.S.S. *Shaw*. It was on a floating dry dock. It was in flames. I started to go down into the pipe fitter's shop to get my toolbox when another wave of Japanese came in. I got under a set of concrete steps at the dry dock where the battleship *Pennsylvania* was. An officer came by and asked me to go into the *Pennsylvania* and try to get the fires out. A bomb had penetrated the marine deck, and . . . three decks below. Under that was the magazines: ammunition, powder, shells. I said "There ain't no way I'm gonna go down there." It could blow up any minute. I was young and 16, not stupid."

—quoted in *The Good War*

In less than two hours, the Japanese had killed 2,403 Americans and wounded 1,178 more. The surprise raid had sunk or damaged 21 ships, including 8 battleships—nearly the whole U.S. Pacific fleet. More than 300 aircraft were severely damaged or destroyed. These losses constituted greater damage than the U.S. Navy had suffered in all of World War I. By chance, three aircraft carriers at sea escaped the disaster. Their survival would prove crucial to the war's outcome.

**REACTION TO PEARL HARBOR** In Washington, the mood ranged from outrage to panic. At the White House, Eleanor Roosevelt watched closely as her husband absorbed the news from Hawaii, "each report more terrible than the last." Beneath the president's calm, Eleanor could see how worried he was. "I never wanted to have to fight this war on two fronts," Roosevelt told his wife. "We haven't the Navy to fight in both the Atlantic and the Pacific . . . so we will have to build up the Navy and the Air Force and that will mean that we will have to take a good many defeats before we can have a victory."

The next day, President Roosevelt addressed Congress. "Yesterday, December 7, 1941, a date which will live in infamy," he said, "[the Japanese launched] an unprovoked and dastardly attack." Congress quickly approved Roosevelt's request for a declaration of war against Japan. Three days later, Germany and Italy declared war on the United States.

For all the damage done at Pearl Harbor, perhaps the greatest was to the cause of isolationism. Many who had been former isolationists now supported an all-out American effort. After the surprise attack, isolationist senator Burton Wheeler proclaimed, "The only thing now to do is to lick the hell out of them."

**Vocabulary**  
**infamy:** evil fame or reputation

## ECONOMIC BACKGROUND

### WAR AND THE DEPRESSION

The approach of war did what all the programs of the New Deal could not do—end the Great Depression. As defense spending skyrocketed in 1940, long-idle factories came back to life. A merry-go-round company began producing gun mounts; a stove factory made lifeboats; a famous New York toy maker made compasses; a pinball-machine company made armor-piercing shells.

With factories hiring again, the nation's unemployment rolls began shrinking rapidly—by 400,000 in August 1940 and by another 500,000 in September. By the time the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, America was heading back to work. (See *Keynesian Economics* on page R42 in the Economics Handbook.)

## SECTION 4

### ASSESSMENT

**1. TERMS & NAMES** For each term or name, write a sentence explaining its significance.

- Axis powers
- Lend-Lease Act

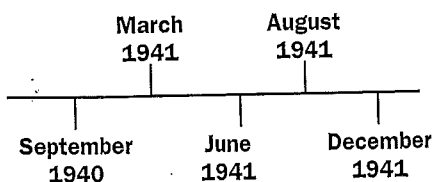
- Atlantic Charter
- Allies

- Hideki Tojo

### MAIN IDEA

#### 2. TAKING NOTES

Create a time line of key events leading to America's entry into World War II. Use the dates below as a guide.



Which of the events that you listed was most influential in bringing the United States into the war? Why?

### CRITICAL THINKING

#### 3. EVALUATING DECISIONS

Do you think that the United States should have waited to be attacked before declaring war? **Think About:**

- the reputation of the United States
- the influence of isolationists
- the events at Pearl Harbor

#### 4. PREDICTING EFFECTS

What problem would the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor solve for Roosevelt? What new problems would it create?

#### 5. ANALYZING PRIMARY SOURCES

Although the U.S. Congress was still unwilling to declare war early in 1941, Churchill told his war cabinet,

**"We must have patience and trust to the tide which is flowing our way, and to events."**

What do you think Churchill meant by this remark? Support your answer.

Name:  
Date:

US 32

### America Moves Toward War Timeline

While reading chapter 24.4, complete the following timeline. Define each term on the timeline.

- **September 1939 – Cash & Carry** – *what is it and why did we do it?*
- **Summer 1940 – “All aid Short of War”** – *what did we do and why?*
- **September 1940 – Tripartite Pact** – *what is it and what's its aim to the US?*
- **1940 – Selective Service Act**
- **March 1941 – Lend-Lease Act** – *what was it and why did the U.S. take this position?*
- **Summer 1941 – Atlantic Charter** – *who was involved, what did it entail?*
- **December 1941 – Pearl Harbor Attack** – *what happened, why, & how did US respond?*

## **End of WWII: Perilous Fight Video Guide**

### ***Part IV: Start with Atom Bomb Scene***

- ~~1. How does the US justify the use of the atomic bomb?~~
2. How many people have died in WWII?
3. What are the feelings of Americans at the end of the war? (at least 5 emotions/feelings/reactions)

## **The 20<sup>th</sup> Century: Video Guide**

1. What is the state of Europe at the end of WWII?
2. What countries are able to help these ruined European countries?
3. How was Europe divided? Which city represented this division?
4. What is the Marshall Plan? What are its motives?
5. What is the Berlin Airlift?
6. Why does the US feel threatened post WWII?